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ABSTRACT

This new report series grows out of internal discussions at the Education Development Center (EDC) about the meaning of equity in education, student diversity, and reflective practice. This premiere issue looks across the EDC at a wide array of projects focused on equity and diversity. The following articles are included: (1) "Introduction: Living and Learning in World of Diversities"; (2) "Preventing Violence and Beyond: Facing New Challenges in a Changing World. National Network of Prevention Practitioners"; (3) "Twenty Years of Inclusion in the Head Start Classroom: New England RAP, A Head Start Quality Improvement Center for Disabilities Services"; (4) "Community-Based Education for Latina Women: Breaking Barriers"; and (5) "Promoting Equity for Girls and Women: The Women's Educational Equity Act Resource Center." (SLD)

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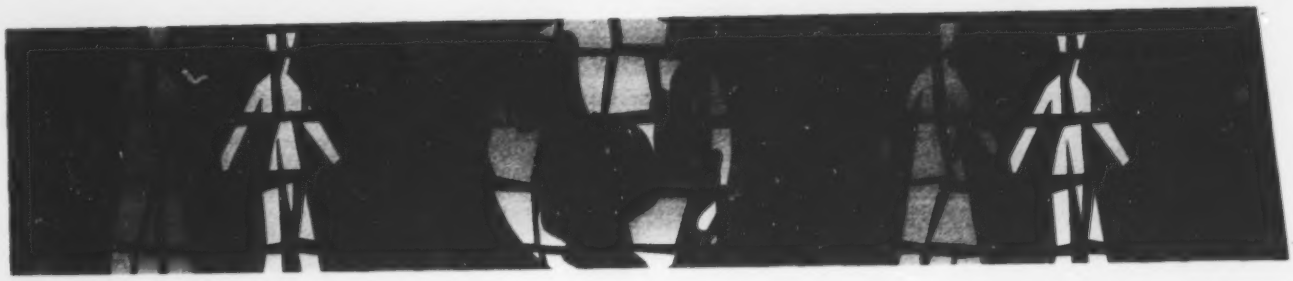

AN EDC REPORT SERIES

SPRING 1999

Premiere Issue

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# Living and Learning in a World of *Diversities*

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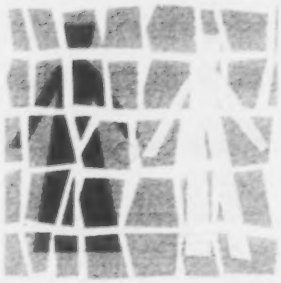

Education Development Center, Inc.

Founded in 1958, EDC is an international nonprofit organization committed to promoting education, public health, and sustainable development around the world. We conduct research and implement programs in such areas as early child development, K–12 education, health promotion, workforce preparation, and institutional reform.

For more information, visit us on the Web at www.edc.org.

## EDC Offices

Boston
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02458-1060
Telephone: (617) 969-7100
Fax: (617) 969-5979
http://www.edc.org

New York
Center for Children and Technology
96 Morton Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10014
Telephone: (212) 807-4200
Fax: (212) 633-8804
http://www.edc.org/CCT/

Washington, DC
Education Development Center, Inc.
1250 24th Street, N.W., Suite 270
Washington, DC 20037
Telephone: (202) 466-0540
Fax: (202) 223-4059

Rhode Island
Center for Children & Families
359 Thames Street
Newport, RI 02840
Telephone: (401) 846-6728
Fax: (401) 848-0176

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**Editor**
Dan Tobin

**Associate Editor**
Melissa Burns

**Production Manager**
Jennifer Roscoe

**Graphic Designer**
Emily Osman

**Copy Editors**
Jennifer Davis-Kay
Elena Palanzi

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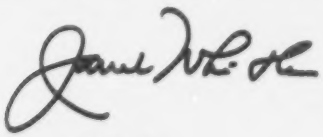
As I attend meetings throughout EDC, we talk frequently about the importance of reflective practice. Both in our own work and in our partnerships with health professionals, community organizers, policymakers, and educators, we seek to create opportunities for professional reflection—times when we ask ourselves and our peers to pause and think about the meaning of our work, the ways in which we are working together, and the progress we are making toward our goals.

This new report series, *Mosaic*, grows out of EDC's internal discussions about the importance of reflective practice. In this premiere issue, we look across EDC at a wide array of projects focused on common goals of equity and diversity. What do we really mean by those terms, and how does our understanding of them, and our commitment to them, guide our work?

I hope you will find this and later issues of *Mosaic* both provocative and inspiring to your own work. Any reactions or experiences you wish to share will be most welcome and will be incorporated into EDC's ongoing reflection.

I hope you enjoy the discussion.



Janet Whitla
President and CEO
Education Development Center, Inc.

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# Living and Learning in a World of Diversities

*In the summer of 1960,* Reverend Solomon B. Caulker, an African college administrator from Sierra Leone, traveled to Israel to attend an international conference on improving science education in developing countries. After listening to several papers on nuclear power, Caulker stood up to address the group.

*"While it is of great interest to talk about nuclear physics and fusion and all these things . . . it is of even greater interest to know how to save so many of our babies, for in Sierra Leone, 8 out of every 10 babies who are born die before they are one year old . . . One of the most difficult problems of the African people in these underdeveloped states is to understand that there is any relationship physically between cause and effect. This is a primary problem: whether typhoid is caused by drinking dirty water or whether it is caused by someone who has bewitched you, whether your babies are dying because you are not feeding them properly, or whether they die because someone who hates you put sickness on them [these questions are] of far more importance to me, and I am hoping that toward the end of the conference I can go home and say there is a possibility that these things do change."*[1]

Caulker's comments had a powerful effect on several Westerners in the audience, including Jerrold Zacharias, EDC's founder. Zacharias had been invited to the conference to speak about *PSSC Physics*—the landmark high school curriculum he and his colleagues had developed. But he returned home preoccupied by his conversations with Caulker and the problems of Africa. Within months, Zacharias had secured an initial planning grant to bring a team of African and American educators together to study African education and address the critical link between science education and public health. The team decided they needed to begin with mathematics education, to provide the framework for science. EDC launched the African Mathematics Project, a curriculum and teacher training program, and it ran until 1975. The companion African Primary Science Program, an elementary science curriculum project, ran from 1965 through 1976.

This 15-year collaboration between EDC and 10 African countries had a wide-ranging impact—both on African education and on EDC's development. Over the course of these projects, EDC evolved from an organization specializing in science education to one focused on issues of equity, access to learning opportunities and social services, and human development. Many of the most challenging and compelling questions we face today can be found in our early work in Africa, including, How can we bring together diverse coalitions—both within the United States and around the world—to work on collaborative solutions? How can we ensure that all participants are full partners in the sharing of knowledge, resources, services, and expertise? How can we design and adapt learning tools to improve access to education for the most disadvantaged populations? And, most importantly, how can we employ these tools to strengthen the critical

1 Jack S. Goldstein, *A Different Sort of Time: The Life of Jerrold R. Zacharias* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992) 194

connections that Solomon Caulker described so eloquently—the connections between education, health, and human development?

Last January, EDC's Executive Committee and Board of Trustees met with senior EDC project staff to discuss many of these questions. The general topic of the meeting was "Equity-Related Work at EDC," but as the discussion unfolded, it became clear that the term "equity" encompasses a wide range of complex issues. It also became clear that conceptions of equity and other related terms are constantly evolving, which raises the ongoing need not only to examine our progress toward our goals but also to make sure that we understand and agree on just what those goals are. In this publication we share parts of that discussion with you, and we provide concrete examples of projects that we believe are promoting equity in different ways and in different arenas.

## Evolving Terms: From Equality to Equity

Dr. Eric Jolly, EDC's director of special projects, has spent his career studying and explaining the meanings of terms like "equity" and "access." Jolly, a Cherokee storyteller and an appointee to the Congressionally Chartered Committee for Equal Opportunity in Science and Engineering, came to EDC from the University of Nebraska, where he was director of affirmative action and diversity.

"When the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was first formulated it dealt with a very rudimentary definition of equality, which was 'the absence of hostile action,' rather than the presence of hospitable environment," says Jolly. "And the absence of hostile action was actually intended to focus on one issue in America—the issue of race. But without any appreciable change in the budget, Congress did expand the charge: first, to include women, later, the disabled, later, veterans of the Vietnam era, and later, those over age 40. So now the charge of the EEOC includes all but about 15 percent of the U.S. population—on the same budget.

"Under the old definition," Jolly continues, "equality of opportunity reasoned that if you presented me with two children, one who is starving and one who is overweight but poorly nourished, we would give them the same diet—because, after all, same meant equal and equal meant same. It was a very limited definition of equity. Yes, they both had an opportunity to receive a nutritious diet, but it was a diet that didn't address their individual needs and so it didn't produce an equal outcome: two healthy children. That's why we've begun to expand our approach to focus on equality of outcomes, rather than equality of opportunity."

Access. Hospitable environments. Empowerment. Equality of outcomes. How can these terms help us measure the impact and reach of EDC projects today?

### Access

Embedded in the definition of access is a series of questions, beginning with, "Access to what? and by whom?" At EDC, we work to assist various underserved populations in gaining access to services, opportunities, professionals (researchers, trainers, policymakers, etc.), and a range of learning tools—from quality curriculum materials to protocols for cancer screening to innovative technology. But we also focus on a complementary, or reciprocal, conception of access: namely, access to the strengths, contributions, and unique perspectives of people who tend not to be heard from in public discourse.

## Access By Design

For the staff of the Access By Design project, the goal of universal access to technology goes well beyond equipment and wiring issues. It involves bringing disadvantaged communities into discussions about the design, development, and uses of technology, and about the policies that govern those uses. "We see our role as translators," says Ellen Wahl, one of the project's directors. "We translate policy issues to community members, and we translate perspectives from these communities to policymakers and to the industry."

Wahl points out that legal and policy issues that seem distant may have a direct impact on daily life in local neighborhoods. For example, businesses and government agencies are providing more and more information and services online without comparable services offline—which can mean a lack of equal opportunity for those without access to the Internet. The shift to online commerce and communication can affect everything from the closing of bank branches to the way the public is notified of government meetings and regulations.

The staff of Access By Design spends a good deal of its time meeting with community leaders and organizations to find out how they perceive and use technological tools, and—perhaps most importantly—what kinds of needs and desires they have that are not being met by existing or available technology. "Rather than starting with products and then seeing how people use them, we try to start with people's needs and then figure out what kinds of tools would help fulfill them," comments Wahl. She cites a number of examples of the kinds of ideas and information her staff has gathered from these meetings:

- At Iris House, a New York City clinic for women with HIV, access to communications technology could enable participants to get good, current medical information. These women have a need for not just the raw information, but also for interpretation and discussion of the information so that it is relevant to their individual situations. They also expressed a desire to use video technology to create living legacies for their families.

- Staff members of the Rhode Island Indian Council saw ways in which they could have used technology applications to mediate a recent dispute between Indian groups over the repatriation of ancestral bones. As the negotiations began to break down and the dispute became more public, a white selectman got involved, which irritated the Indian council. "That selectman probably wouldn't have become involved if we [members of the Indian groups] had had e-mail," commented one of the staff members. He felt that e-mail would have provided the council and the tribes with a forum for discussing the issues among themselves in a less public, less confrontational, and less formal way.

- In New Orleans, organizations working with substance abusers talked about ways that they could use technology to create a more coordinated approach to treatment. For example, they could more easily share their data and thereby track who had received which services and, ultimately, rates of recidivism.

One of the primary goals of this kind of research is to create a process for engaging diverse communities in sustained discussions about technology development and policy. "We're talking to people in various communities around the country to push the questions of access and equity

and diversity," explains Co-Project Director Laura Jeffers. "We try to understand not just how people get access to technologies but also what they do with those technologies, and what kinds of support they need to use them effectively." The project is currently developing resource kits and guidelines for community leaders interested in organizing such discussions.

At the same time, project staff are sharing the data they've gathered at the community level with policymakers and industry leaders. "One of our goals is to influence the review process the industry uses when it designs new products," Wahl says. "Every new product goes through extensive alpha and beta testing to see how various people view and use the product. Whom do they involve in those tests? What kinds of questions do they ask? We want them to expand the kinds of people they include and the range of questions they ask.

"We are not naïve about product development," adds Wahl. "We know that companies don't go forward with a product unless they see a fair amount of potential revenue. So we talk about markets and revenues while also talking about the critical importance of full access to technology. It's not just about adding another feature to a given product; it's about rethinking some of the basic assumptions about what technology can do."

### Multichannel Learning Center

While the staff and partners of Access By Design are imagining new technologies, several other projects are expanding access to learning through innovative uses of existing technologies. EDC's Multichannel Learning Center (MCL) was founded on the philosophy that we need a variety of media, delivery systems, and teaching strategies—multiple channels—to improve learning opportunities around the world. Consider, for example, the challenge of improving education in Bolivia. According to a 1997 report by USAID, 94 percent of rural households live in absolute poverty, much of the population does not speak Spanish, and 55 percent of the population is functionally illiterate in any language.

It is a different statistic, however, that EDC staff has capitalized on in its 10 years of work in Bolivia. Nearly 7 out of 10 households in Bolivia have radios, a proportion far greater than any of the other 80 poorest countries in the world. Recognizing radio's potential to overcome various educational, economic, and geographical obstacles, EDC—in partnership with the Bolivian government and other non-governmental organizations—began developing and piloting radio-based curriculum materials. Where they are used, the radio lessons enliven the classroom atmosphere through the imaginative use of stories, songs, physical activities, and role plays, which invite the active participation of the student in the learning process. The strategies began as an experiment but have been institutionalized and adapted to meet the needs of Bolivians across the country.

Since 1988, EDC has developed and delivered more than 600 Radio Math and Radio Health lessons, and close to a million Bolivian students and teachers have benefited from them. Evaluations of learning gains showed that children who used the programs far outperformed their counterparts in control groups.

A key to the radio lessons is that they use the medium as a lever for improving person-to-person education. The lessons are designed to engage teachers and caregivers as well as children, thereby tapping the educational potential of existing relationships. They also expand access to learning by providing educational opportunities outside of schools and within homes, villages, and communities.

## Hospitable Environments

Embedding technology and other learning tools within community settings—whether the community is a New York HIV clinic or a Bolivian village—is a strategy common to MCL, Access By Design, and many other EDC projects. It's one of many strategies we use to build what Eric Jolly refers to as "hospitable environments"—places where people feel free and comfortable to seek services and pursue their own goals and interests.

### Community Technology Centers' Network

Community Technology Centers' Network (CTCNet), an alliance of more than 285 neighborhood computer centers serving low-income populations, provides a well-documented example of how the development of hospitable environments promotes equity and access. CTCs—which are based in public housing developments, libraries, museums, and youth centers—offer a variety of educational and vocational opportunities at low or no cost, including computer, job training, English language, and GED classes. They also provide community members with unstructured access to computers, the Internet, and e-mail.

Making technology available and accessible to those who otherwise could not afford it is crucial to promoting equity in today's technology-driven society. But the environment in which those technology tools exist is equally important, according to a recent EDC study.[2] Researchers surveyed more than 800 people who visited technology centers affiliated with CTCNet. (More than 60 percent of the respondents were female, two-thirds identified themselves as nonwhite, and 75 percent reported household incomes of less than $30,000.) One of the most striking findings in the survey was that respondents ranked "a comfortable, supportive atmosphere" as the top reason for coming to a technology center and, more importantly, for coming back; 94 percent expressed positive feelings about their center, while only 6 percent said their feelings were negative or mixed.

"CTCs stand out not only because they offer underserved populations access to technology, but also because they offer people opportunities to pursue their educational, employment, and other personal goals," says June Mark, one of the authors of the study.

EDC researchers found that the majority of CTCNet participants use their centers to improve job skills and look for jobs. Well over half the job seekers at the centers reported that participation at the center brought them significantly closer to their vocational goals. In addition, most users reported gaining increased self-confidence, greater self-esteem, and support for pursuing personal goals through their experiences at the centers.

## Empowerment

"Empowerment" is one of the more problematic terms in the vocabulary of equity. Traditional usage of the word often had a paternalistic connotation: Those in power will lend a helping hand to others who lack the strength to stand up for themselves. However, when today's equity experts speak of empowerment, they mean two things: representation and power—or, as Jolly puts it, "input and impact. The first challenge is to bring diverse voices into the conversation, to make sure they are represented. But we also have to realize that representation isn't enough. Input without impact is tokenism." To Jolly, empowerment happens when the concerns of the disenfranchised are so ingrained in the group or community that

2. Clifton Chow et al., *Impact of CTCNet Affiliates: Findings from a National Survey of Users of Community Technology Centers* (Newton, MA: Education Development Center, Inc., 1998).

they don't need to be present for every conversation; someone else will continue to press on the issues they've raised.

"Equity is not just opening up opportunities for people who have traditionally been disenfranchised," adds Maria-Paz Avery, of EDC's Center for Education, Employment, and Community. "We will never have equity if we don't also work with the groups that in fact have the power in this society. For me, it's an issue of reciprocity. If we're talking about the disabled populations, we need to talk about the abled populations. In our projects, we've put a lot of effort into making sure that we're getting the participation of those who are in power."

### Hate Crime Prevention: A Multidisciplinary Approach

For two decades, Karen McLaughlin has worked to bridge the gulf that exists between one of the most powerful groups in society—criminal justice professionals—and one of the most vulnerable—the victims of hate crimes. As the first executive director of the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance and now as a senior policy analyst in EDC's Center for Violence and Injury Prevention, McLaughlin has focused on identifying and removing the barriers that prevent hate crime victims from reporting crimes to police. Simultaneously, she has worked with criminal justice and social service professionals to improve their response to the reports that do come in.

McLaughlin was drawn to these issues because of the double-layer of silence surrounding hate crimes. Victims are reluctant to report these crimes and, perhaps as a result, the perspectives of hate crime victims are often absent from public policy discussions. McLaughlin recalls being struck by that absence when she convened a public hearing to award the first funding under the Massachusetts Victims of Crime Act, in 1984. "We had a large group of people representing victims of a wide range of crimes—drunk driving, sexual assault, homicide victims. But no one showed up on behalf of the victims of hate crimes. No one even mentioned hate crimes. That was a formative experience for me. I saw a real need to advocate and reform the system."

In 1990, McLaughlin helped spearhead passage of the federal Hate Crime Reporting law. "That year, we had a few hundred victims reporting to the police. Last year, more than 8,000 victims reported to police that they were hate crime victims. But victims of these crimes are still reluctant to come forward."

The evolution of McLaughlin's work—from victim assistance to public policy—illustrates the deepening definition of empowerment that Jolly and Avery describe. McLaughlin realized that in order to have real impact, hate crime victims had to do much more than speak up; they had to change the system.

Much of McLaughlin's work these days is devoted to infusing the perspectives of hate crime victims into the everyday practice of criminal justice

### Reasons why hate crime victims don't report crimes

- *Fear that nothing will be done*
- *Fear of law enforcement authorities*
- *Fear of retaliation*
- *Ignorance of rights*
- *Shame*
- *Language and cultural barriers*

professionals. "The number one reason why victims don't report crimes is because they think nothing will be done," says McLaughlin. "We organize victim focus groups to identify the various barriers to access and equity, and then we relay those findings back to the professionals. We want to make police and prosecutors aware of any beliefs, attitudes, and practices they have that may interfere with their ability to fully investigate and act upon reported hate crimes." McLaughlin's projects also use that research to identify gaps in legislation and to develop materials on best practices in hate crime prevention, comprehensive service delivery, and model laws, so that victims and victim support groups can lobby their own state governments.

Last spring, when Attorney General Janet Reno presented McLaughlin with the Crime Victim Service Award, she reflected on what McLaughlin had accomplished over the course of her career. "Karen is a true visionary of the victims' movement, having initiated a remarkable series of firsts in victim services during the past two decades," said Reno, noting, among other things, McLaughlin's role in developing the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. "Her influence on victim services in the United States and abroad has been profound."

## Equality of Outcomes

In arguing for an emphasis on equitable outcomes rather than equal opportunity, Eric Jolly uses the example of two malnourished children—one starving and one overfed. Providing these children with identical diets will not meet the ultimate goal of two healthy children. But what does it mean to apply that metaphor to, say, the education of a classroom of children, or an entire school full of children? Does it mean developing a customized curriculum for every child? Or does it mean that every child is going to leave that school with the same level of proficiency?

No. What it means is that we develop teaching strategies and curriculum materials that are robust enough to provide rich learning experiences for the widest possible range of students. In fact, one of the fundamental ways in which we evaluate student tasks and teaching approaches is by the degree to which they engage and challenge students of differing abilities and backgrounds.

### Center for Mathematics Education

Mark Driscoll and Deborah Bryant specialize in the emerging field of mathematics assessment, which refers to the process teachers use to understand, respond to, and evaluate student thinking. As part of their training programs for teachers, Driscoll and Bryant help participants develop what Driscoll calls "good taste" in choosing worthwhile mathematics activities. In their new book, *Learning About Assessment, Learning Through Assessment*, Driscoll and Bryant write about the need for teachers to ensure that "tasks involving important mathematics elicit from the broadest range of students what they truly know and can do, and that there are no unnecessary barriers due to wording or context."

In addition to emphasizing the appropriateness of tasks for a range of students, Driscoll and Bryant urge teachers to continually return to the question of what is essential mathematics for students to learn. This theme cuts across the work of EDC content experts in mathematics, science, language arts, and health education. Focusing on outcomes for students means focusing on the larger picture, rather than asking what kinds of facts we want children to learn, we ask what kinds of understanding and skills we want them to build.

"The point," says Al Cuoco, director of EDC's Center for Mathematics Education," is that there isn't one approach to mathematics that works for everyone. Still, I can point to three experiences I want every kid coming out of a middle or high school mathematics class to have: (1) some experience solving difficult problems; (2) some experience with abstraction; and (3) some experience building a theory. Those kinds of experiences, to me, are the essence of mathematics."

### Center for Science Education

Judith Opert Sandler, director of EDC's Center for Science Education (CSE), is also committed to enhancing academic outcomes for the broadest array of students. In an effort to improve science education in urban school districts across the country, she and her staff work district by district, introducing excellent materials and teaching strategies, providing teacher leadership and professional development opportunities, and challenging some longstanding beliefs about what constitutes quality science instruction and which students are entitled to it. "For some kids science is seen as a must; for others it is not," she explains. "This is an equity issue."

In their work with schools, the staff members at CSE have learned that considerations of equity in the science curriculum can't be the purview of the special education teacher or the diversity coordinator alone. In order to be effective, equitable policies and practices must be central to the design of every science program. "We need science coordinators and other administrators to become advocates for quality science programs for all of their students," she explains. "And in order to be effective advocates, they need to see, firsthand, what good science looks like."

At a recent workshop for school teachers and administrators, Sandler and her staff engaged participants in good science—what they refer to as "inquiry-based, hands-on" activities. "Our goal," says Doris Santamaria, one of the conference organizers, "was to use a real classroom activity to initiate conversations between science coordinators and their district colleagues on what it takes to provide high-quality science instruction for all their students, especially those who traditionally have not had access to good science instruction: students with disabilities, English language learners, girls, and students from different racial and ethnic groups."

Participants at the equity workshop heard a range of practical strategies for deepening—and opening up—their schools' science programs. For example, Maria Dufek, a bilingual teacher from the Clark County school district in Las Vegas, emphasized the importance of an integrated curriculum for English language learners. "Science coordinators need to make connections with ESL teachers so that students get content-based ESL learning," she explained. In other sessions, EDC's Judy Zorfass demonstrated ways in which lessons could be adapted for students with disabilities. After participants worked through a lesson on electrical circuits, Zorfass pointed out that blind students who can't see the illumination of a light bulb could be guided to feel the bulb for heat.

The workshop also moved into discussions of policy and funding. Not surprisingly, the urban districts represented at the workshop have little money to invest in upgrading their science programs. To Melva Green, a curriculum specialist from the Baltimore City Schools, the key is to make sure that science gets its fair share of the funds that are available. "I say to the principals in my district, 'You've spent your money on reading three years in a row; maybe it's time to spend some on science.'" In Jackson, Mississippi, another CUSER district, instructional specialist Harriet Garrison is

using a recently received federal grant to develop links between the language arts and science curricula. "I'm excited about the new books we bought because they are literature based and have strong science content—stories and picture books about ecosystems and animals and plant life that will really engage all the kids," says Garrison.

For Judith Sandler and her staff at the Center for Science Education, equity is not an add-on or a special feature of good science materials and instruction; it's integral. That all educational programs should be evaluated, in part, on their ability to engage diverse learners is a conviction that runs through the work of each EDC expert quoted in this article. And it's evident in the work of the earliest EDC projects—particularly the African mathematics and science programs. As Solomon Caulker argued in 1960, rigorous and engaging science education—rigorous education in general—is critical for healthy human development. Through four decades of developing and implementing health and education programs for every kind of learner—children and adults around the world—we've learned firsthand how elusive the goals of full equity and access can be.

But we've also discovered strategies that work, beginning with the recognition that successful initiatives are built on collaborations in which the participants are viewed as partners in the development of learning tools, and not as passive recipients. In creating educational experiences for any group of people—from schoolchildren to adult practitioners—we make a concerted effort to involve those with diverse backgrounds and abilities in the process of design and testing. This, we believe, is a critical step in the development of powerful teachers, mentors, tools, and settings. We then apply the same philosophy to our evaluation of various learning experiences. The quality of the activities should be measured in part by their ability to engage diverse learners. That is why at EDC we tend to speak of "excellence" and "equity" in the same breath. Designing truly equitable learning experiences is a challenge worth pursuing because it leads toward richer and more rigorous learning opportunities for everyone. ■

# Preventing Violence and Beyond: Facing New Challenges in a Changing World

## *National Network of Violence Prevention Practitioners*

Toward the end of the *Live Talk* discussion program that opened EDC's recent violence prevention summit, the audience of 200 people grew silent as Sha-King Graham, 17, spoke about the police officer who had killed his sister. "When she died, there were just a few lines in the paper. When a cop gets killed, it's front-page news," said Graham, a member of Youth Force of New York. Later in the discussion, Graham's fellow panelist, rapper Chill E.B., returned to the subject of police and police conduct. "We don't need more police. We need to get them to do their job. To serve and protect," Chill added, to the applause of the crowd.

For police officers in the audience, such as Lieutenant Gary French of the Boston Police Department, it was an inauspicious beginning to the summit. "What am I going to say to this liberal crowd?" French wondered aloud after the discussion.

But to Gwendolyn Dilworth, the driving force behind the gathering, French's rhetorical question spoke to the point of the summit: What *do* people like Graham, Chill, and French have to say to one another? How can we get people from different vantage points and with differing views to work in concert to prevent violence?

Dilworth is director of EDC's National Network of Violence Prevention Practitioners (NNVPP). This national coalition brings together a diverse group of people, organizations, and disciplines to develop an integrated approach to reducing youth violence in our communities. That diversity was readily apparent at the recent NNVPP summit. Attendees included youth organizers, representatives of community-based organizations, researchers and academicians, government agencies and foundations, police and probation officers, journalists, entertainers, and artists.

As it turned out, participants found plenty of common ground—as well as areas of disagreement and tension. Perhaps the key unifying theme throughout the three-day conference was the recognition that the eclectic mix of groups and organizations represented have to find new ways to work together—both on a national level and within specific communities.

On that score, Gary French fit right in. As commander of the Boston Police Department Youth Strike Force, French is clearly a tough cop, and he makes no bones about the aggressive tactics his force uses to head off gang activity and violence. But when describing the secrets to Boston's success in reducing gang-related violence, he sounded more like a grassroots community organizer. "When I first started with the force, our only goal was to respond to a call in less than six minutes, whether it was someone in trouble or lighting someone's pilot light. Now the whole emphasis is on building partnerships and reducing crime." French spoke about the mutual respect his force has built with youth "streetworkers" who help patrol the neighborhoods. And he talked about the importance of sharing grants and sharing credit with all his partners—including other branches of the city government, other enforcement agencies, civil rights organizations, youth groups, and social service agencies.

Youth volunteers are among French's most important partners—and he makes sure that they serve as equal partners alongside city officials, ministers, and researchers. That's the same approach Dilworth brings to the management of NNVPP, including the planning of the summit. For



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example, youth played a prominent role in the summit's planning forum. "The young people who participated in the planning forum made it very clear they wanted a voice," said Dilworth. "They didn't want adults to speak for them. What they did want was for the adults to provide them with tools and capabilities so that they could speak, and speak more effectively. 'Help us get equipment, help us use technology,' they told us. 'Give us your knowledge and capabilities, and we will put what we have on the table as well, and that will help us develop our voice. But don't try to be that voice for us.'"

Dilworth listened hard to that advice, and the young people's contributions to the summit program set the conference apart from a typical gathering of professionals, researchers, and policymakers. Members of Youth Force of New York, based in the South Bronx, kicked off the summit by teaching participants to write hip-hop introductions for themselves. Later, Youth Force members and other youth participants served on panels alongside national experts representing such organizations as the American Academy of Pediatricians, the National Crime Prevention Council, and the U.S. Justice Department.

This unusual intermingling of ages, cultures, and perspectives played out throughout the summit. In session after session, participants learned of a wide range of innovative approaches and unconventional alliances that are showing promising results in reducing conflicts, prejudice, or violence. For example:

- Rotynia Adams-Payne, founder and director of Mothers Against Murder and Assault, described her program, which brings young, violent offenders together with the mothers of murder victims. "How could these mothers go on after burying their babies? But when we talked with them, they were saying, 'I've got to do something. I can't just live here with my pain.' So we recruited about 40 of these survivors to work together as a group. We decided that these mothers were the message—that they were the way to reach some of the young men who were labeled hard core. We thought that a mother's love might be able to get through to them. For these young men, we found that it is very powerful to feel that these women cared about them—women who had no reason to care."

- As a panelist on Live Talk, Jaime Ramirez, 17, of the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, spoke about the connection between environmental awareness and violence prevention. Ramirez, who is about to graduate from high school, spends a week in school and a week working for the Corps. "The best solutions are when people care. I talk to ghetto kids in Long Beach, where I live, and I try to get them focused on something positive. The Conservation Corps has done that for me. Before the Corps, I just got into trouble. They made me environmentally aware. I never used to appreciate a tree. I never paid any attention. But now, people have shown me how to appreciate it. I say, 'Wow, that's a beautiful tree.'"

- Three high school students—Paul MacDonald, LaSonya Stewart, and Steven Schwartz—presented an anti-prejudice curriculum they developed as part of a program sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League. In the first year of the program, the ADL brought a group of Ethiopian Jews to Los Angeles to meet with diverse groups of students. MacDonald recalled the first meeting: "I was sitting in a history class when a group of Ethiopian Jews came for a visit. We were all fascinated because none of us knew there were black Jews. For me and other blacks, it was really interesting to hear people who looked like us talk about being Jewish. We all learned something different from them. For example, the Hispanic students could relate to the immigrant experience of the Ethiopian Jews.

who had emigrated to Israel. There were many kinds of opportunities for us to relate to the group. They shared information about their lives, their religion, their tastes in music and clothes. We just shared so many common bonds." MacDonald and Stewart—both of whom are African American—traveled with student groups to Israel to meet with Ethiopian Jews. After returning, they joined with other students—such as Schwartz, who is Jewish—to create a peer education program based on their experiences. The students produced a video featuring vignettes on interracial dating, racist humor, and racist graffiti, which aim to stimulate discussion, facilitated by peer educators like MacDonald, Stewart, and Schwartz.

## On Working With Kids in "The System"

### A *Live Talk* Excerpt

*Dr. Michael Holryod, American Academy of Pediatricians: "If we started our immunization programs at age 20, they wouldn't work. And yet we wait until a youngster gets to junior high to start violence prevention work. Then, you have to change him. It's too late."*

*Sarah Ingersoll, U.S. Department of Justice: "No, it's not too late. Not even when they are in the justice system. The majority of kids in the system never return again. I completely agree that we need to invest in early prevention, but we're not going to solve the problem of violence if we don't deal with kids who are in the system. We need to invest more money into the juvenile justice system, it has been the bastard child of social services for too long."*

*Michael Baloing, California Wellness Foundation: "We find some of our grantees believe that they have to choose between working with 6th graders or with hard-core gang members. We think the most effective programs are those that don't choose, those that connect the hard core with the 6th graders and use the older kids to educate the younger."*

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# Twenty Years of Inclusion in the Head Start Classroom

## *New England RAP, A Head Start Quality Improvement Center for Disabilities Services*

When Eleanore Grater Lewis began teaching more than 40 years ago, it was very unusual to see a child with learning disabilities in a preschool classroom. "In those days, children with disabilities were largely excluded from any sort of preschool experience," she explains. "Basically there were two options: Either they stayed home or they were institutionalized."

Today, as assistant director of the New England RAP, a Head Start Quality Improvement Center for Disabilities Services, which serves the regional Head Start community, Lewis visits preschool classrooms that include children with a wide range of physical and cognitive disabilities—from blindness to hyperactivity, from speech and language impairments to mental retardation, from cerebral palsy to spina bifida. "It has taken time," she says, "but today teachers no longer question the appropriateness of including children with disabilities in their classrooms."

For 20 years, RAP has assisted Head Start teachers and managers in meeting the challenge of integrating students with disabilities into the full richness of Head Start programs and curriculum. As the first national project to commit to educating children with disabilities, Head Start led the way by mandating in 1973 that 10 percent of its enrollment be set aside for students with disabilities. Three years later, RAP was funded at EDC to support Head Start program staff in their efforts to realize this goal.

Since 1976, with the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), public understanding of what it means to include children with disabilities in the classroom has changed. "Initially there was mainstreaming," explains Philip Printz, director of RAP, "which essentially meant that the kids with disabilities got to do art and maybe some free playtime and meals with the other students—especially meals." The rest of the day they were taught separately.

"The big evolution came with the movement from mainstreaming to the full integration of children with disabilities into the classroom," Printz continues. But integration often meant that though students were physically in the classroom, they weren't involved in the learning activities. "They might be sitting by themselves at another table and doing separate work," he explains.

Today, when the staff at RAP talk about inclusion, they mean that students with disabilities are fully involved in all aspects of a classroom's activities. "For instance, if students are working in groups at their tables, and there is a student with spina bifida who cannot sit at the same table, then you make modifications," Lewis says. "Does it need to be a table activity? Can you do it on the floor?" Or if there is a student in a wheelchair, the teacher can raise the table so that he or she can collaborate with the able-bodied students. "Teachers need to think creatively about how to arrange their classrooms so all students can play and learn together," Lewis continues. "Maybe this means they use stools for the other kids at the table, or special benches."

The assistance that RAP staff members provide Head Start Program staff and families takes many forms, including maintaining a library, convening conferences and courses, publishing articles, and influencing education policy at the local, state, and national levels.

But what excites the staff most is the direct contact they have with the students, teachers, and managers

of Head Start programs. Frequently, managers call the center asking for advice on how to handle various classroom challenges, from managing the dietary restrictions for a child with diabetes, to what sort of new equipment is available for a student with a particular disability, to how to handle a child with violent behavior. "We begin by asking the teacher questions about the child, the family, the classroom arrangement, and the teaching style, to determine what sort of support she and the direct service staff need," Printz explains. Project staff might then conduct research of in-house and online materials or consult with state agencies to gather relevant information. For especially complex challenges, like those posed by students with behavioral difficulties, a staff member visits the class to observe the situation directly. "We always involve a team in this sort of work—the teachers, the director, the disabilities manager, the family, the family service worker," says Printz. "We really stress with program staff the importance of a holistic approach."

In fact, an emphasis on holistic solutions has increasingly characterized the RAP approach over the past decade. In its early years, the staff relied more heavily on on-site training and workshops for teachers and program directors, but they soon recognized the limitations to this one-shot approach. "Eleanore might have gone out to a center, for example, to give a training," Printz says. "Then next year she would be invited back to the same classroom to do the same training again. And again." This sort of experience raised questions for RAP staff about the lasting impact of its work. "Maybe what was needed was something different," continues Printz, "so we began working with Head Start managers to look at systems that support inclusion. What sort of follow-up do teachers need to make inclusion work? What sort of ongoing support do they need? What are the tangible outcomes of a particular effort?"

As a result, their work today is far more systemic than it used to be, relying on coalition building and comprehensive solutions. Their current efforts include not only working with on-site teams, but also offering courses for university credit and other ongoing professional development activities.

> "It has taken time, but today teachers no longer question the appropriateness of including children with disabilities in their classrooms."

Part of their comprehensive approach involves coordination with the state and local agencies that support child welfare services—agencies like the Departments of Public Health, Education, Mental Health, and Social Services, and the state Head Start associations—in order to promote collaboration among them. "Everybody gets excited about work at the grassroots level," says Printz, "but there has to be a structure in place to support that kind of work." In recent years, RAP has facilitated the drafting and implementing of interagency agreements among these groups in five of the six New England states.

While efforts to include children with disabilities take place in many arenas, Head Start classrooms remain on the front lines. When Eleanore Lewis visits these classrooms today, she sees evidence of improved educational environments for students in a variety of ways—in ramps going out to playgrounds and parent resource rooms, in tables adjusted to the height of a wheelchair, in parents willing to be more vocal and more involved. But sometimes she recognizes success in an apparently ordinary classroom situation, one that might escape the eye of a less seasoned educator. "If I walk into a classroom and the children are sitting in a circle at story time, and I see one boy sitting quietly by himself at a table keeping his hands busy with playdough, I know that the teacher has made an accommodation for that student who is not able to sit still for long in a circle. That child can still listen to the story, but now he can listen in a way that works for him."

# Community-Based Education for Latina Women

## *Breaking Barriers*

Lesvia Fong and her husband emigrated from Guatemala to the United States in 1994, in search of a more promising future. Although Lesvia had led a productive life in Guatemala, studying accounting at the university at night and working days, opportunities for economic advancement in her country were scarce. After arriving in this country, however, Lesvia quickly discovered that her limited command of English meant that even many low-level jobs were out of reach. With two young children at home, the horizons of her day soon contracted to caring for children, performing household chores, and watching television. She grew increasingly dependent on her husband for even the simplest tasks: "I had to wait at home until my husband arrived to take me on errands, to go to the doctor, for example. It was like being a deaf-mute—because I could only listen, I couldn't speak."

Leticia Lara left Mexico City for the United States when she was 18. "I came, supposedly, to study," she explains. But with little money and no English, her hopes for higher education gave way to a low-paying job, marriage, and children. "I wanted to learn more English, but I didn't know how. I didn't have any information on where to take courses."

Today, thanks to the efforts of EDC's Gabriela Canepa, Fong and Lara have joined 18 other Latina mothers living in Waltham, Massachusetts, in a class that offers them not only English language instruction but also lessons in job readiness, social skills, community action, health, and self-esteem. "Most adult education program for immigrants in this country are vertical. They do English classes or job training or health, but they don't try to deal with the whole person," explains Canepa, the project director. "We have developed a comprehensive program that deals with their growth inside, not just with the world outside."

The pilot project, Breaking Barriers, was conceived by Canepa, herself an immigrant from Peru, to address what she sees as a pressing need—not just in Waltham, but in many cities across the country. "The Latino population will soon be the largest minority population in this country, but our participation in politics, education, and the economy is rather limited," she says. "And sadly, the poorest of the poor in this country are Latina women and their children."

As both project director and classroom facilitator, Canepa is addressing head-on the complex web of issues contributing to high levels of poverty among Latina women: limited knowledge of English, low levels of education, unfamiliarity with local social and political systems, and traditional gender roles that encourage female passivity and limit women's access to educational and professional opportunities. "I designed the program based on the needs of the participants, but with two overall objectives: to promote leadership and self-esteem in the participants and to provide them with access to all the different services in the community," explains Canepa. "Also, I hope to stimulate their interest in further education and better economic opportunities."

During the first 12-week phase of the pilot project, the group met four mornings a week, four hours per meeting, in the basement of the Waltham Head Start building. Daycare was provided for the students' children during classtime, an expensive necessity for these mothers who would otherwise be required to stay home full time. "The child care was fundamental so that I could study," explains Fong. "Without that I wouldn't have been able to be part of the program."

Half of the classtime was devoted to English language instruction, while the other half was spent investigating a broad array of topics. For instance, frequent guest speakers from the community led discussions on a host of issues important to the lives of the women, from female sexuality and domestic violence, to tenants' rights, health care access for immigrant families, and job opportunities, both traditional and nontraditional. One week they spoke with a human resources manager from the Marriott Hotel, the next week a female carpenter. "This was a real discovery—that nontraditional jobs are open to them," Canepa explains. "I like to bring in very progressive Latina speakers. I want to challenge these women's ideas about who they are and who they can be."

Canepa also believes that influential Latina women have something to teach her students about how to participate successfully in American public life—how to negotiate schools and workplaces, local government agencies, and even personal relationships. She hopes these lessons will enable them to become better advocates for themselves, their families, and their communities. For instance, Margarita Figueroa explains how the course has emboldened her to seek new learning experiences: "Because of the course, I dared to go to the Waltham Public Library and get a private English tutor. I didn't know that something like that was available to me before." Several other women have recently formed a Latino parents' group at their children's school. And Leticia Lara is planning a career in counseling women about domestic violence—in large part because of a guest speaker from Casa Myrna Vasquez, a shelter for battered women.

"Most adult education program for immigrants in this country are vertical. They do English classes or job training or health, but they don't try to deal with the whole person. We have developed a comprehensive program that deals with their growth inside, not just with the world outside."

In the next two phases of Breaking Barriers, the women will have an opportunity to build on what they've learned while fulfilling the reciprocal premise of the project—the idea of giving back to the community. The women in the first group are now serving as mentors and tutors to a new group of students. As they've developed their self-confidence, knowledge, and communication skills, the women have become active in community organizations, significantly increasing the visibility of the Latino population in Waltham. For example, some members recently participated in a citywide health fair, and the whole group attended the Mayor's Picnic, making them the first Latino group ever to participate in this annual fundraising event. "Latino women have a lot to offer this country that has offered us so much," Canepa contends. "This project is a way to facilitate that process by providing women with better access to education and employment so they can contribute more. That philosophy of partnership and giving back is at the heart of this project."

# Promoting Equity for Girls and Women

## *The Women's Educational Equity Act Resource Center*

After RAP, the longest-running EDC project comprises our largest body of equity work: the Women's Educational Equity Act Resource Center (WEEA). For more than two decades, the WEEA Resource Center has developed, published, and distributed innovative, gender-fair materials to teachers and education leaders around the country. WEEA publications range from classroom materials, program guides, and research reports to anthologies of women's writing. These materials form the core of what is now a national knowledge base for gender equity.

In its early years, the WEEA Resource Center focused on building awareness of gender equity issues, career counseling for displaced homemakers and other women reentering school and the work force, recruitment of women and girls into nontraditional fields, and math and science education for girls. During the 1980s, the center's focus shifted to providing educational and vocational materials to urban and rural women living in poverty, while it continued to work on math and science education and nontraditional careers.

Today WEEA has targeted new challenges, including gender-based violence and school-to-work issues, and it has reached out to new audiences by increasing the number of titles available in Spanish, as well as the number of works by and about Native American women. "Into the next century, we hope to provide leadership on gender equity as an inclusive model," explains Katherine Hanson, WEEA's director. "In other words, we plan to investigate how equity for girls and women supports equity for racial and ethnic groups, as well as for the disabled and others."

WEEA is also employing new tools to reach its diverse audiences, beginning with a website featuring a range of equity resources, contacts, moderated discussions, and online courses. Recent discussions on single-sex classrooms and sexual harassment have generated active and lively debate, and the center is in the process of conducting an online course called *Engaging Middle School Girls in Math and Science*.

> "We see the website as a good vehicle for expanding the discussion of issues related to equity in education."

"We see the website as a good vehicle for expanding the discussion of issues related to equity in education," comments Susan Smith, who moderates the online discussions. "We had 80–100 people join our mailing list during the discussion of single-sex classrooms. Through the discussions, we gather a great deal of information to use in our digests and to enter into our database of equity resources and services available around the country."

Visit the WEEA website at <www.edc.org/WomensEquity>.

## Women's Equity Then and Now

**Number of women in the U.S. Senate**
1972: 0
today:9

**Percentage of female high school graduates enrolled in college**
1973: 43
1994: 63

**Number of girls involved in high school athletics**
1971: 30,000
1996: 2,400,000

**Percentage of women earning bachelor's degrees**
1971: 18
1994: 27

**Number of women participating in intercollegiate athletics**
1971: 25,000
1994: 100,000

**Percentage of undergraduate degrees in biology earned by women**
1962: 28
1992: 52

**Percentage of undergraduate degrees in math awarded to women**
1962: 27
1992: 47

**Percentage of bachelor's degrees in engineering earned by women**
1966: .05
1992: 15

**Percentage of law degrees earned by women**
1971: 7
1994: 43

**Percentage of medical degrees granted to women**
1972: 9
1994: 38

**Percentage of dental degrees granted to women**
1972: 1
1994: 38

**Percent of business degrees earned by women**
1962: 8
1992: 47

**Number of women in the U.S. Congress**
1972: 14
today: 52

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## Information on Featured Projects

*Access by Design*
*Project Directors: Ellen Wahl, Eric Jolly, Laura Jeffers*
*Funded by: National Science Foundation*

*Multichannel Learning Center*
*Center Director: Michael Laflin*

*CTCNet*
*Project Directors: Holly Carter, Antonia Stone*
*Funded by: National Science Foundation*

*Hate Crime Prevention: A Multidisciplinary Approach*
*Project Director: Karen A. McLaughlin*
*Funded by: U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education*

*Center for Mathematics Education*
*Center Director: Al Cuoco*

*Learning About Assessment, Learning Through Assessment*
*by Marc Driscoll and Deborah Bryant*
*Published by National Academy Press*

*Center for Urban Science Education*
*Project Directors: Judith Opert Sandler, Karen Worth, Jeanne Rose Century*
*Funded by: National Science Foundation*

*Breaking Barriers*
*Project Director: Gabriela Canepa*
*Funded by: The Federal Savings Bank, Clipper Ship Foundation, Massachusetts Department of Education Early Learning Services, Polaroid Foundation, Miranda Foundation, BankBoston Foundation*

*New England RAP, A Head Start Quality Improvement*
*Center for Disabilities Services*
*Project Director: Philip H. Printz*
*Funded by: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families*

*National Network of Violence Prevention Practitioners*
*Project Director: Gwendolyn Dilworth*
*Funded by: Carnegie Corporation of New York*

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Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02458-1060
Phone (617)969-7100
Fax (617)969-5979
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